

Takedown Tuesday: Building Greatness One Step at a Time

By Jon Gums – Dakota Grappler

Do you ever dive deep into a subject and or a person and find inspiration, I did with an artist... Vincent van Gogh. So here we go!

"Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together." — Vincent van Gogh

In wrestling, as in life, the path to greatness isn't marked by sudden bursts of brilliance but by the steady, unyielding commitment to small, deliberate actions. Each drill, each practice, each moment you spend perfecting your technique — they all add up to something far greater than the sum of their parts. It's about embracing the grind and celebrating the little victories along the way.

Embracing the Process

Van Gogh's words resonate deeply with the journey of a wrestler. Success on the mat doesn't come from a single match or one triumphant moment. It's built through countless hours of training, refining your takedowns, perfecting your escapes, and mastering your stance. It's about the patient pursuit of progress — knowing that every repetition, no matter how small, moves you one step closer to your goals.

In the world of wrestling, patience and persistence are key. It's not just about pinning your opponent or scoring the perfect reversal. It's about developing the mindset that values each incremental gain — like a more fluid sprawl or a quicker shot to the legs. These small improvements might seem insignificant at the moment, but they're laying the groundwork for your ultimate success.

Quotes from Wrestling Legends

Wrestling greats have echoed this sentiment in their own way:

- **Dan Gable**, legendary coach and Olympic gold medalist, once said, "The key is not the will to win. Everybody has that. It is the will to prepare to win that is important." It's this will to put in the small, consistent efforts that sets great wrestlers apart.
- **Cael Sanderson**, one of the most successful wrestlers in NCAA history, emphasized the importance of daily habits when he said, "You have to earn it every day." He reminds us that it's the daily work — the drills, the conditioning, the mental preparation — that leads to greatness.

Celebrate the Small Wins

Every wrestler dreams of having their hand raised in victory at the end of a match. But the true measure of success lies in those countless small moments that lead up to it. Celebrate each time

you execute a takedown cleaner than before or when your endurance improves by just a little bit. Each of these moments is a victory in its own right, a step forward on the road to becoming the best version of yourself.

The Wrestling Mindset: Trust the Process

Just like Van Gogh, who created masterpiece after masterpiece by continually building on his skills, a wrestler's journey is all about the process. It's about trusting that the time and energy you invest today will pay off tomorrow. When you focus on the journey — the practice, the discipline, the repetition — you allow yourself to grow into the champion you're destined to be.

Putting It All Together

Let Van Gogh's lesson remind you that in wrestling, as in life, greatness is built one small action at a time. Don't get discouraged if the results don't come right away. Instead, focus on the day-to-day grind, the sweat you pour into the mat, and the small victories that no one else sees. That's where the real magic happens.

Remember, your journey on the mat isn't defined by a single match or moment. It's shaped by every step you take, every move you make, and every bit of effort you put into becoming better than you were yesterday.